United Nations A/C.2/64/11

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 November 2009

Original: English

Sixty-fourth session
Second Committee
Agenda item 53 (d)
Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations

Letter dated 20 October 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), I have the honour to transmit herewith the AOSIS Declaration on Climate Change, adopted by acclamation by the Heads of State and Government, ministers and heads of delegation at the AOSIS Summit on Climate Change, which was held at the American Museum of Natural History, the Rose Center, in New York on Monday, 21 September 2009 (see annex).

On behalf of the Member States of AOSIS, I have the further honour to request that the AOSIS Declaration on Climate Change be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 53 (d).

(*Signed*) Dessima M. **Williams**
Permanent Representative

09-59318 (E) 061109

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 20 October 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Alliance of Small Island States Declaration on Climate Change 2009

We, the Member States of the Alliance of Small Island States, meeting in New York this 21st day of September,

Gravely concerned that climate change poses the most serious threat to our survival and viability, and that it undermines our efforts to achieve sustainable development goals and threatens our very existence,

Alarmed that emerging scientific evidence shows that the effects of human-induced climate change are worse than previously projected and that the impacts of climate change which we are already experiencing, including sea level rise, more frequent and extreme weather events, ocean acidification, coral bleaching, coastal erosion, and changing precipitation patterns, will further intensify,

Greatly disturbed that despite the mitigation commitments made by Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, especially those of the developed countries, global emissions continue to increase, leading to rapidly accelerating impacts, accompanied by costs and burdens that are beyond the ability of many, but especially the small island developing States and other particularly vulnerable countries, to control,

Profoundly disappointed by the lack of apparent ambition within the international climate change negotiations to protect the small island developing States and other particularly vulnerable countries, their peoples, culture, land and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change and expressing our further concern at the slow pace of these negotiations,

1. *Now therefore*, we, call upon the international community, with the developed countries taking the lead, to undertake urgent, ambitious and decisive action to significantly reduce emissions of all greenhouse gases, including fast action strategies, and to support the small island developing States and other particularly vulnerable countries in their efforts to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, including through the provision of increased levels of financial and technological resources.

2. We underscore that adaptation must be an urgent and immediate global priority.

3. We firmly maintain that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

4. We reaffirm the principles enshrined in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities having regard to national circumstances, and the precautionary principle.

5. We urge all Parties to work with an increased sense of urgency and purpose towards an ambitious, comprehensive and meaningful outcome that preserves the

legal nature of the international climate change regime and the existing commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol.

6. We assert thus that the outcome to be concluded at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Copenhagen in 2009 should inter alia:

(a) Use the avoidance of adverse climate change impacts on the small island developing States as one of the key benchmarks for assessing its appropriateness, consistent with the precautionary principle and the principle of prevention;

(b) Adopt a package of mitigation activities, now, up to and beyond 2012, that provides for:

(i) Long-term stabilization of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at well below the level of 350 parts per million of carbon dioxide equivalent;

(ii) Global average surface temperature increases to be limited to well below 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels;

(iii) Global greenhouse gas emissions to peak by 2015 and decline thereafter;

(iv) Reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions by more than 85 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050;

(v) Annex I parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to reduce their collective greenhouse gas emissions by more than 45 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020 and more than 95 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050, given their historical responsibility;

(vi) A significant deviation from business as usual by developing countries through measurable, reportable and verifiable nationally appropriate mitigation actions in the context of sustainable development, supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity-building, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner;

(c) Provide the small island developing States with new, additional, predictable, transparent and adequate sources of grant-based financing to fully meet the adaptation needs of these particularly vulnerable countries, and ensure for SIDS that access is timely, direct, prioritized and simplified;

(d) Call for an urgent and significant scaling up of the provision of financial resources and investment that is adequate, predictable and sustainable to support action on mitigation in developing country parties for the enhanced implementation of national mitigation strategies, including positive incentives, the mobilization of public- and private-sector funding and investment, and facilitation of carbon-friendly investment choices;

(e) Ensure that renewable energy and energy efficiency form essential pillars of future mitigation actions by all countries, taking into account national circumstances;

(f) Establish a mechanism to address loss and damage from climate change comprised of a disaster risk component, insurance, and compensation funds, to help SIDS manage the financial and economic risks arising from the impacts of climate change; to assist in rapid recovery and rehabilitation from climate change-related

extreme weather events and to address unavoidable damage and loss associated with the adverse effects of climate change;

(g) Provide support to the small island developing States to enhance their capacities to respond to the challenges brought on by climate change and to access the technologies that will be required to undertake needed mitigation actions and to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, noting the obligations of annex I countries under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in this regard.

7. In our voluntary efforts to defeat deforestation and increase carbon sequestration, finance, technology and capacity development is necessary to underpin a step-wise process for reducing emissions and increasing carbon sequestration through the conservation and sustainable management of forests and the use of crops which are good carbon dioxide sequestrators. Based on national circumstances, a well designed REDD-Plus instrument will require resource mobilization from a variety of sources, including public, private and market-based, as appropriate,[1] "that employ robust methodological standards for measurable, reportable and verifiable actions. Robust environmental integrity will need to be maintained if a REDD[2] mechanism is linked to the international carbon markets.

8. Acknowledging the portfolio of technologies identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to achieve lower stabilization levels, including, among others, carbon storage and sequestration, hydropower, solar, wind, geothermal and bioenergy, and determined to avail ourselves of such technologies, as appropriate and based on their feasibility and applicability, we encourage, where applicable, national, regional and international efforts for consideration of a process to overcome technical, economic and policy barriers with a view to facilitating the development and commercialization of appropriate and affordable low- and zero-emission technologies.

9. We further recognize that the inclusion of carbon capture and storage is potentially an important mitigation option for achieving the ambitious emission reduction targets being supported by the Alliance of Small Island States and urge the development of a programme of work on carbon capture and storage in order to resolve related issues.

10. We also emphasize that there is an urgent need to consider and address the security implications and the human dimensions of climate change, including, where necessary, initiatives for preparing communities for relocation.

11. We underscore that while the small island developing States contribute the least to global emissions, and have limited human, financial and technical resources, our nations continue to take significant actions towards the reduction of our own emissions, including through regional and interregional energy initiatives.

12. We also recognize the need to reinforce the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process by calling on the big emitters to agree to produce enough clean energy to attain the targets of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius and 350 parts per million of atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations.

---

[1] Tuvalu expressed a reservation on the reference to market-based sources.

[2] Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

13. Finally, we express our support for the establishment of the Headquarters of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Adaptation Fund Board in Barbados.

14. We, the Member States of the Alliance of Small Island States, strongly emphasize the importance of urgent progress towards a fair and meaningful Copenhagen outcome which, through safeguarding the most vulnerable countries, ensures a truly shared and sustainable global vision for our present and future generations.